CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Thursday, 21 May 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Abdelhamid Semichi (Algeria)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I declare open the 621st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

As I announced at our last plenary meeting, I will submit today to the Conference for decision, once we have come to the end of the list of speakers, the recommendation contained in paragraph 11 of the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events concerning the dates scheduled for the next session of the Ad Hoc Group, that is to say from 27 July to 7 August 1992. I will then invite the Conference to take note of the sixth report on the Group of Scientific Experts' second technical test (GSETT-2). Also as announced at the 620th plenary meeting, we will hold today, immediately after this meeting, an informal meeting that will be devoted to the substance of agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters".

I have on the list of speakers for today the representatives of Algeria, Germany, Senegal and South Africa. In keeping with the tradition that has been established in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the President has been entrusted with the task of presenting a biographical sketch of the eminent person who, in special circumstances, is participating in the work of this body. Today, without departing from that tradition, and without hiding my quite justifiable emotion, I have the honour and great pleasure of introducing to you His Excellency Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria.

Following the important responsibilities entrusted to him during Algeria's liberation struggle, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi devoted himself at an early stage to mobilizing support for the Algerian cause, which he had the task of and which were explaining, promoting and defending in all the forums of the nascent and already united third world. From New Delhi to Jakarta, via Bandung, and then from Belgrade to Cairo - all these milestones that evoke the history of the peoples of the third world - Mr. Brahimi was more attached than most to the emergence of the Afro-Asian movement and the non-aligned countries, a movement that was subsequently to leave its incontestable mark on a whole period of contemporary history. As Algerian Ambassador in Cairo and then in London, Mr. Brahimi, following independence, succeeded in contributing tirelessly to the promotion of Algeria and its diplomacy internationally. As Deputy Secretary-General of the Arab League, he devoted all his commitment and his solidarity to the national reconciliation effort in Lebanon and the quest for solutions to the particularly complex problems facing the Middle East.

You will understand that the discretion imposed upon me by my office compels me to stop this biographical outline here. Hence, I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, among us on your behalf and in my capacity as President of the Conference, and without further delay I now give him the floor.

Mr. BRAHIMI (Algeria) (translated from French): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for the kind and quite undeserved words which you were so kind as to address to me. In my turn I would like to say how honoured I feel at being able to speak to you today.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

More than a decade ago, Algeria had the privilege of inaugurating the work of this Conference, the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament which was created by the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Let us acknowledge frankly that after all these years the Conference has not yet recorded any concrete achievements that are commensurate with the hopes and aspirations placed in it by the international community. Whereas in recent times it was easy to ascribe this lack of progress in disarmament to the bipolar international climate, today there is less reason why the improvement in this climate should not be reflected in multilateral disarmament bodies so as to allow them to regain their proper place at last.

It is just as reasonable to expect that the drive which could be seen in recent Soviet-American negotiations should be transmitted to the work of this Conference. This clearly offers an opportunity to reaffirm the necessary complementarity between bilateral and multilateral disarmament negotiations. Because if we are to promote a climate which will be truly conducive to the search for common peace and security, bilateral negotiations cannot replace multilateral efforts. Indeed, if there is one area where the "shared destiny" of mankind and civilization really makes itself felt, it is precisely when we face the threat of a nuclear apocalypse which, through a levelling process of total destruction, would wipe out all peoples without distinction, whether or not they were involved in the conflicts giving rise to such a terrifying global catastrophy. For several years now we have noted with great concern the downgrading of the order of priorities as recognized and identified by the international community. And it is a special source of regret in this regard to note the total absence, within the Conference on Disarmament, of any negotiations to date on nuclear matters.

The negotiations on the convention to ban chemical weapons provide a source of great satisfaction which contrasts all the more with the frustration which we rightly feel as we look at the results of work on the other items on the agenda. We would like to express the wish that these negotiations will be completed this year and that, as a result, nuclear matters will be able to regain their place among the urgent priority tasks which the Conference on Disarmament must tackle. Despite the repeated appeals of the General Assembly calling on the Conference to embark without delay on structured negotiations on nuclear questions, with a view to concluding one or more international agreements on nuclear weapons, it has not been possible for the commitments entered into at the very moment when the Conference was created to be honoured. Our concern is all the greater since, by a strange paradox, the Conference seems to be agreeing to abandon the fundamental theme of disarmament policy and relinquish its original mission of warding off the nuclear peril. This concern takes on its full relevance as we approach the deadline of 1995 for the holding of a review conference of decisive importance for the future of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The failure of the fourth NPT review conference, and in particular the reasons behind that failure, should be borne in mind during the period running from now to that important date.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

It is, in the first place, high time to honour the commitments entered into under that Treaty by the nuclear States, involving, in particular, the negotiation of concrete measures of nuclear disarmament, such as the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. In the same way, it is equally appropriate for those States that have voluntarily renounced the nuclear option to benefit in return, in a legally binding international instrument, from guarantees against the use and the threat of use of nuclear weapons. And finally, it remains important to guarantee equal access for all to nuclear technology in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for development.

Another question of concern to the international community today deserves to be included in the agenda of the Conference. I am referring to the question of transparency in armaments. This is a subject of interest on a variety of grounds to all the members of the international community without exception, whether they be producers, exporters, importers, users or - especially - potential victims of these weapons. However, consideration of this question will remain incomplete as long as it is not broadened in scope to cover fundamental issues hitherto not covered in the General Assembly resolution on the subject. I have in mind in particular the inclusion of the dimension of arms production, and the same applies to the stockpiling and transfer of the related high technologies. Thus transparency has to be extended to weapons of mass destruction, and in particular to nuclear weapons which most dangerously threaten international peace and security.

In considering this question, due account should be taken of the security imperatives specific to each region, and its defence needs. There is also a need to have a serious look at the reasons, very often legitimate ones, for the arms build-up in certain parts of the world which are also keen on peace and security but which for decades now have been suffering from devastating conflicts which they did not seek and which require above all a political settlement. The Conference on Disarmament seems to us to be the most appropriate organ to consider this subject. This will also provide an opportunity for the international community to show its confidence in the CD, by reinstating it in its proper calling in the field of disarmament negotiations.

Mention of the reinstatement of the Conference on Disarmament in its original calling brings me to what we keenly hope will become the first concrete and long-awaited achievement in the history of this Conference. I am referring to the future convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which will be the first truly multilateral disarmament instrument, putting an end to a whole category of particularly devastating and murderous weapons under international control. It is essential for the convention on chemical weapons to be added to the Conference on Disarmament's list of achievements this year. This will be a harbinger of the solutions of the other issues on the agenda of the Conference, in particular those relating to nuclear and space issues.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

Algeria has always been, and remains, in favour of a total ban on chemical weapons and their use. Algeria is not developing and does not produce chemical weapons, and it is not seeking to acquire them. My country remains profoundly convinced that the best way to curb the threat of these weapons is to banish them once and for all, by means of this international convention. In this regard, it will be Algeria's honour and duty to be among the original signatories.

We see this convention as global in scope, universal in membership and non-discriminatory in application. It should in no way be a non-proliferation-type treaty, nor should it constitute an obstacle of any kind to the development of the chemical industry, the transfer of technology or international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemistry. In order for it to be universal and truly acceptable for those States which, like mine, do not possess chemical weapons, the future convention must contain clear and explicit provisions on assistance to be provided to States parties that fall victim to the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. Assistance must be automatic and not linked to considerations which would make it selective. It is true that this instrument is, first and foremost, a disarmament agreement relevant to the security of all States. However, nobody can deny that as stocks of chemical weapons are destroyed under international control, and as the civilian chemical industry has to be subjected to close and continuous surveillance, cooperation in this area has become a vital necessity, in particular for developing countries. And it was the very lack of an international instrument prohibiting chemical weapons and controlling their proliferation which, in the view of some people, justified in the past the institution of an unofficial regime to control the export of certain chemicals known to be toxic. It would be impossible today, and even less tomorrow, as the future convention enters into force, to accept the existence of a dual control regime for States parties. To this end, all existing discriminatory restrictions in the field of the chemical industry will have to be removed. It also seems to us that the verification regime provided for under the convention in its twin dimension of routine verification and challenge verification will be effective in deterring any use for purposes not permitted by the convention.

We appreciate the importance of the outstanding problems; we also appreciate, and in the same way, how much work has already been done. At the present stage of negotiations, only real political will, which is in fact essential, based on a spirit of mutual compromise, will allow us to overcome the actually rather limited number of difficulties which still remain on the most controversial political questions. Although it may carry with it many implications for the chemical industry, in the view of this delegation the future convention fundamentally remains a security treaty for the whole of the international community. Because of this, it is essential for its multilateral dimension to predominate and, consequently, to take equal account of all legitimately expressed concerns.

We believe that the executive body of the future convention should represent the international community as a whole. To achieve this, only equitable geographical distribution as between the various regions of the

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world will be able to secure acceptance by one and all. Clearly, each region will have to take due account of the industrial criterion as it selects its own representatives. Bearing in mind the multilateral dimension of the future convention, the executive council must be given a prime role in the implementation and application of the convention where article IX is concerned. This role is all the more essential and important since this area will involve concerns related to non-compliance. Because although they may be unilateral at the outset, these concerns will certainly come to be concerns for the States parties as a whole, mainly because of the stakes involved in non-compliance with the convention as regards the security of all States.

Allow me to reiterate once again our hope that this phase of the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention will be completed successfully, to allow the Conference to be proud of its success in this area and to seize the opportunities provided by the major changes which have occurred in the world in order to continue its work. The Algerian delegation, I need hardly add, will spare no effort to continue making its own modest contribution to the common endeavour.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria for his important statement. I now wish to welcome warmly to the Conference the Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control of Germany, His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Josef Holik, who is visiting us for the first time today. I would like to thank Ambassador Holik for the interest he attaches to our work and to wish him every possible success in his mission in Geneva. I am sure that the Conference will follow his statement very carefully. I now call on His Excellency the Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control of Germany, Ambassador Dr. Josef Holik.

Mr. HOLIK (Germany): Mr. President, thank you for your kind words of welcome. It is a particular honour for me to address this Conference after His Excellency Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Foreign Minister of Algeria, a country which plays an active role in the negotiations on chemical weapons. I listened with particular interest to his speech as it expressed a strong commitment of the Algerian Government to conclude the negotiations on chemical weapons this year, an undertaking which the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany fully shares.

Let me thank you, Sir, on behalf of the German Government, for the efforts you and your delegation have invested during your term of presidency. The German delegation highly appreciates what you have done in support of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador von Wagner. In addition, your delegation as coordinator for chemical weapons during this year has greatly contributed to the smooth and harmonized cooperation between the groups and between the Group of 21 and the bureau of the Chairman. We also appreciate your efforts to promote progress on other important topics on the CD agenda which you dealt with in your speech.

Being in Geneva at the beginning of the second session of this year's Conference on Disarmament gives me great satisfaction. I think we are all aware this is a crucial moment in the history of the CD. The next few months

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will show whether the intense and fruitful work which you, Mr. President, and your predecessors have invested for many years in these negotiations will make it possible to fulfil finally the task given to the CD by the General Assembly of the United Nations: to achieve an agreement on a CW convention by 1992 and to report this result to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Our political leaders have committed themselves to this aim. The responsibility for achieving it is mainly on the shoulders of those around this table. This responsibility goes beyond negotiating an international agreement that meets specific security interests of the participating States. The members of this Conference have been entrusted by the United Nations with the task of finding a common solution to a fundamental challenge: the spread of weapons of mass destruction. A lasting solution for this task requires cooperation between all members of the community of nations, based upon a global and reliably verifiable ban on chemical weapons.

The CW convention under negotiation in this Conference is indispensable not only as an instrument for suppressing a particularly inhumane category of weapons of mass destruction, but also as a model of cooperative security - a pattern of international behaviour - to which the future belongs. The successful conclusion of a CW convention will therefore be a breakthrough for global disarmament and for international diplomacy. It will disprove those who have doubted the qualification of the CD as the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, comprising representation from all geographical regions.

Before we conclude our common task, we still have to go through an intensive final phase of the negotiations. Let me deal with some of the issues we still have to tackle. I am pleased to hear that intensive open-ended consultations by the Chairman have prepared the ground for answers to the open questions of challenge inspections. A "vision" by the Chairman as now contained in WP.400 is meant to contribute to this process even further. I am glad that this vision seems to find broad support, as the challenge inspection regime constitutes a central pillar of the CW convention.

Industry verification must give a reasonable assurance that chemical industries in all States parties to the future CW convention are used only for purposes not prohibited. The chemical industry, as we all know, is an important factor in the economy of many countries, including my own. Thus, industry verification must neither inhibit nor hamper normal activities contributing to the well-being and development of the economy of a particular State. Germany fully supports this philosophy while, at the same time, asking for the broadest coverage of chemical industry possible under the CW convention. This appears to be the best way of protecting the chemical industry against charges of non-compliance. The position is not only supported by our own chemical industry but by many chemical industry associations throughout the world.

(Mr. Holik, Germany)

The industry verification regime will be unique of its kind. It will contribute to openness and transparency on a global scale unprecedented before. The regime may be complex in its implications but it should remain easy to implement. Particularly in the latter regard, additional efforts might be necessary.

Another issue of particular importance is that the CW convention does not leave any loopholes for circumvention. Therefore, we are particularly pleased that the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances has been established under article 1 of the draft convention. However, additional questions emerged in the context of the definition of chemical weapons. Germany remains committed to a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, while, at the same time, acknowledging that certain disabling chemicals might have to be used under specific circumstances. We urge all delegations to find a solution which would not endanger the credibility of the most important element of the CW convention, the total ban on chemical weapons.

Another major goal is to rid the world of all existing stocks of chemical weapons. Declared stocks have to be destroyed within a limited time frame. These provisions must be feasible in particular for the major stock holders. We recognize the difficulties linked with such provisions, but we insist that solutions must be readily available in order not to delay the conclusion of the CW convention this year. In this context, we support the idea to involve the executive council, should the order of destruction for exceptional reasons need to be reconsidered.

In our view, the overall objective of the CW convention is to strengthen international security. Destroying existing CW stocks, closing down former CW production facilities and verifying non-production of chemical weapons are its essential elements. However, in the context of old and abandoned chemical weapons additional problems arise. Old stocks which can no longer be used for military purposes do not pose a security risk. They must be considered as toxic waste. Of course, we are all interested to liberate this planet from all kinds of ecological burdens. But the CW convention as a security agreement cannot fulfil this task. On balance, the solution proposed by Ambassador Brotodiningrat for old chemical weapons produced before 1925 as well as for those produced before 1946 represents in our view a reasonable compromise on this issue.

With regard to abandoned chemical weapons a delicate balance has to be struck between the obligations of the territorial and the abandoning State. The convention must provide for language that is sufficiently clear to ensure destruction of the abandoned chemical weapons in the interest of all States parties and that includes the necessary flexibility given the differing historical background of specific cases. It remains our view that specific cases can best be solved bilaterally. This should be reflected in the text of the convention.

I have already stressed the importance of the civilian chemical industry. For many nations its contribution to economic and technological development is very important. Many countries have expressed their interest

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that national export control measures designed to stem the proliferation of chemical weapons should be removed following the institution of the CW convention. I recognize the logic of this position. We are convinced that a cooperative approach to fight proliferation of chemical weapons worldwide is the only effective long-term strategy to achieve this goal. However, nobody can expect the CW convention to function smoothly and prefectly right from the first day after entering into force. The degree to which verification measures of the convention can be implemented and the confidence this creates will, in my mind, be the criterion against which the necessity of auxiliary national non-proliferation measures has to be judged. No country will continue national measures when it feels that international cooperation through the CW convention does the job already. So the success of our common endeavours will determine when this point will be reached. In my view, the provisions proposed by the Friend of the Chair charged with this question provide a sound basis for agreement.

There might have been some doubts still in February whether the CD would be able to conclude its work on the CW convention this year. These doubts, it seems to me, have disappeared. Thanks to the joint efforts of all delegations, the CW convention is really within reach.

Two months ago, the CD experienced an important moment when Foreign Minister Evans of Australia and other speakers addressed the future of these negotiations. The resolution and the momentum which one could witness then have led to braod agreement between CD delegations and to the intensification of the CW negotiations. Representing the country of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, I am grateful for the support for the proposals which Ambassador von Wagner, at the request of the CD, has laid out in WP.394.

The "draft convention" presented by the Chairman and his bureau in WP.400 opens the way to the timely conclusion of the CW negotiations. A number of issues still have to be settled before an un-bracketed "Chairman's draft" can be presented around mid-June, as indicated in WP.394. This "Chairman's draft" will aspire to take all views into account and try to be as fair to the positions of all partners as is possible. Naturally, compromises must also have the best interests of the convention in mind. It would help none of us to agree to provisions which turn out to be unable to fulfil their purpose.

I am prepared, if necessary, to face personally the views and the judgement of your Governments and to explain the "Chairman's draft". Of course, changes and amendments will not be impossible at this point. However, given the balanced nature the text will aspire to, this then will have to be on a "give and take" basis, not attempts to shift the balance in one's own favour.

The German Government is committed to the goal of a CW convention which will secure universal acceptance, but I am convinced that States represented here share this commitment. The major prerequisite for universality is consensus on the draft convention here in the CD. One of the very few instructions which Ambassador von Wagner has received from Bonn is to try his

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utmost to achieve a CW convention supported by all member States of the CD. I am giving you this confidential piece of information because Ambassador von Wagner will need your support; and I am confident he will receive it. However, we have obligated ourselves in the CD mandate to reach a result this year. We could not afford to be held hostage in this effort by a theoretically possible minute minority of determined objectors.

The result we strive for is the broadest possible adherence to the CW convention. This could be achieved by a consensus of the Conference on Disarmament and the transmittal of the text to New York, where it will then draw hopefully unanimous support by the General Assembly. Only the General Assembly of the United Nations representing all peoples of the world can provide the political endorsement which this most comprehensive and politically important arms control treaty deserves. Following endorsement of our common text at the United Nations General Assembly, a signing conference in Paris towards the end of the year should enable as many nations as possible to give the convention the universality it needs and deserves. This will lead us then to the start of the work of the preparatory commission in early 1993.

This of course is a glimpse beyond our immediate work. I feel, however, that it is important not to lose sight of the objectives we want to see transferred into binding international standards.

I am convinced: together we can achieve what we have been working for for so long.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank his Excellency the Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control of Germany for his important statement and his kind words to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal, Ambassador Alioune Sene.

Mr. SENE (Senegal) (translated from French): Mr. President, allow me first of all, since I am taking the floor for the first time during this session of the Conference on Disarmament, to express very sincerely my warmest congratulations to you and say how proud we are to see a worthy son of Africa preside over our Conference. This function that you are performing with the competence of an experienced diplomat consequently honours us on several accounts. And how can I find words for your neighbour the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, my friend Lakhdar Brahimi, whose excellent presentation before this august assembly is unequaled save by the scope and prestige of his very brilliant diplomatic career, of which you, Mr. President, vouchsafed us a number of praiseworthy sequences? I would also like to pay tribute to the very significant contribution made by Dr. Josef Holik, the German Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control, who shed the light of an industrialized country on the thinking behind the convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons, and did so in a substantive and substantial way. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Berasategui on taking up his new functions and pay tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador Komatina, for the distinguished services that he rendered to the United Nations.

(Mr. Sene, Senegal)

Likewise I wish to make use of the opportunity I have been offered to address all our thanks to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his brilliant introductory statement of 14 May 1992 on the international political situation and the role that should be played by the United Nations, in the present context, in order to promote international peace and security. As he pointed out so well in his statement, the contours of international security have radically changed. In fact, the end of the cold war and the start of arms reductions have placed the question of disarmament in a totally different perspective. Rather than being perceived from the viewpoint of balance between the two super-Powers, arms control and disarmament are increasingly recognized as constituents of a programme of international security in which the issues should be addressed from the point of view of preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peace-keeping. In order to do this, the role of the United Nations, and in particular the Conference on Disarmament, cannot but be fundamental. This is why my delegation welcomed very favourably and supports Mr. Petrovsky's assertion that we must not remain prisoners of the past. For the challenge of change is upon us and we should respond to it by taking into consideration, this time, the conceptual basis of the disarmament process. We have no choice but to recognize that, under present trends, resort to multilateral action to deal with threats to international peace and security is becoming more and more important.

Moreover, Mr. President, in your first statement as President of this Conference, you broached this question brilliantly by stating that whereas efforts were made in the past to attribute the lack of progress in multilateral disarmament to an often unfavourable international climate, today there are grounds to hope that, given the new circumstances, multilateral bodies will recover their proper place and at last take up their universal mission in the service of disarmament. 1992 could then see the establishment of the first genuinely multilateral disarmament instrument which will put an end to the existence of an entire category of particularly devastating and murderous weapons, namely chemical weapons. Thanks to such a fine achievement, we hope that the United Nations, through our Conference, the only organ responsible for disarmament negotiations, would be seeing its original purpose reinstated. Its responsibility, in this field, would then no longer be reduced to the passive role which, for decades, has confined it to the simple function of recording agreements concluded outside it. But, as the entire international community has recognized, progress on these disarmament issues can be made only if a minimum level of confidence and transparency can be guaranteed in the mastery of arms control. Whether these be weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons.

In that connection, the decision adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1991, entitled "Transparency in armaments", is most encouraging. Through this decision, the General Assembly invites the Conference on Disarmament to elaborate universal practical means to enhance openness and transparency in the acquisition of conventional weapons as well as in the transfer of high technology for military purposes. On this point, my delegation naturally subscribes to the view expounded by certain countries, namely that any system devised for this purpose will be insufficient and inadequate as long as its scope is not extended to include, inter alia, the

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production of these weapons and the extension of this transparency to weapons of mass destruction, and more particularly nuclear weapons, as the Minister from Algeria has just emphasized. From this point of view, we listened with great interest to the argument put forward on 14 May 1992 by the representative of Turkey, who focused his statement on the important issue of transparency. We consider, as he does, that this concept is in itself a measure for building confidence that will reduce suspicions among States both regionally and internationally.

My delegation therefore endorses the proposal that has been made requesting the Conference on Disarmament first of all to place this issue on its agenda and then to set up an ad hoc committee to study it. Moreover, the recent creation in the United Nations of a standardized system for annual reporting of States' military budgets is also conducive to confidence-building and transparency. Consequently, we are happy to note, as was stated by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, that the United Nations is working hard with government experts to develop procedures for the effective implementation of this standardized system in the shape of the United Nations Register.

Another subject that I would like to address is that of chemical weapons. I have already had occasion to say before this Conference how much my country, Senegal, is in favour of a ban that would make chemical weapons illegal and prohibit their use. The position of the Government of the Republic of Senegal remains unchanged and is based on the principle that the future convention, while protecting civil chemical industry and encouraging international cooperation in the area of the peaceful uses of chemical products, should, first and foremost, provide for the total destruction of present stockpiles and ban the use of these weapons. In order to do this, it must be universal and non-discriminatory. My delegation fully appreciates the extent of the work already accomplished by the Conference in this area. This is why I would particularly like to pay tribute to the dedication and competence with which Ambassador Adolf von Wagner of Germany, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, has been discharging his mission, and to assure him of the full cooperation and the constant readiness of my delegation to help him in his difficult task.

For all that, the Senegalese delegation is aware of the problems that have yet to be solved. But it remains convinced that we will achieve the aim of finalizing a convention this year if all those involved in the negotiations abide by this commitment by carrying out meaningful and pragmatic talks and demonstrating fully their political will. It goes without saying, as was stated by my colleague from Kenya in his statement on 14 May, that this desire to conclude a convention come what may before the end of 1992 should go hand in hand with a degree of caution because the outstanding questions deserve clear and well-thought-out solutions, especially in the area of verification of the chemical industry, inspections, the executive council and article XI on economic and technological development. Most certainly, with the necessary political will we shall of course be able to overcome these difficulties. This is what the entire international community expects from our Conference. We must not disappoint it.

(Mr. Sene, Senegal)

Before concluding I would like to report to our Conference that on 4 May 1992, the President of the Republic of Senegal, His Excellency Mr. Abdou Diouf, in his capacity as Chairman of the Summit-level Group for South-South consultation and cooperation, also known as the Group of 15 or G.15, published a G.15 position paper on the new world order. In the part of that document devoted to disarmament and development, the G.15 heads of State and government state:

> "The process of disarmament should be linked to the process of development and the fostering of global security in its most comprehensive form. Developing countries will endeavour to encourage the process of disarmament globally and regionally, conscious of the necessity to channel the maximum resources for developmental purposes. Moreover, real resources being released at present as a result of lower global military spending, should be diverted for the economic and social development of developing countries.
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> "The continuing trend towards disarmament resulting from the end of East-West confrontation, the reduction of military expenditures and the progressive reduction of international tensions should make it possible to extract a 'peace dividend' in the form of financial and technical resources, for the enhancement of international development cooperation.
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> "Appropriate structures or bodies should be established to implement this process and the creation of an international fund within the framework of the United Nations, represents the best way of channelling resources freed as a result of disarmament for the purposes of development."

In any event the end of the cold war and the profound changes generated by the upheavals as well as the Earth-shaking serious events have shown us quite clearly that this is not "the end of history". Thus a new world order conceived in the light of current reality and new ideas should be instituted by accommodating the interests of all nations, both large and small, in the area of disarmament and the establishment of a universal system of common security. It is no secret that war is still being waged in various parts of the world and reminds us painfully that, to be fully effective, the development process should focus not only on the reduction of existing stockpiles, but also on the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms. Hence the need to create the means to prevent armed conflicts wherever international security is threatened. It is also necessary to establish reliable and effective mechanisms designed to promote transparency and confidence, as further measures that would favour international security and reduce the volume of weapons. Moreover, because of the worldwide scale of economic markets and technologies, the globalization and interdependence of disarmament problems, even though security questions have national and regional aspects, they also have an international dimension that cannot be denied.

Hence the importance conferred on the United Nations by its efforts to set up a new equilibrium in security matters through specific negotiations and agreements on arms control and disarmament. Of course, these negotiations

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cannot be separated from the other part of the international agenda devoted to dialogue on cooperation for development and the environment with a view to reducing the disparities in economic wealth and the structural imbalances between North and South in order to respond to the political and legal imperatives of a changing world. However extensive the role of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly in the building of the new world order, the Conference on Disarmament, as a multilateral negotiating body, has a major contribution to make, as its agenda attests, to reduce the nuclear threat, prevent an arms race in space, eliminate radiological weapons and promote work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament. Especially as the Conference stands on the threshold of an unprecedented event, as you emphasized yourself just now, Sir, with the convention on chemical weapons which will doubtless mark the establishment of the most comprehensive system for security and cooperation in the history of disarmament.

As to the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons, this is one of the most burning security issues of our time. In this connection, the recent accession of a number of States to the non-proliferation Treaty, and the conclusion by other States of various agreements on nuclear safeguards with IAEA, are positive elements which reconfirm our view that it is necessary to strengthen the non-proliferation regime of which the NPT is the fundamental pillar. Senegal, for its part, is firmly in favour of the extension of the NPT at the review conference in 1995. The growing interest that many States are showing in establishing in their respective regions denuclearized zones or zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is a sign of good will and commitment to disarmament which deserves the support of the international community.

This is also the place to recall that at its summit held in Cairo in 1964, the Organization of African Unity adopted a declaration making Africa a denuclearized zone, and we are happy that the Government of South Africa, which was not present, but whose efforts to dismantle apartheid we are following with interest today, has agreed to submit its atomic plants to IAEA checks. It is also understood that despite the differences of opinion on time-frames, the banning of nuclear tests is first and foremost an essential stage in mankind's march towards a denuclearized world. But in the meantime there is a need to devise effective legal arrangements which would offer non-nuclear-weapon States guarantees against the use or threat of use of these weapons. This is also the place and the moment to welcome the impetus given by the important INF, CFE and START treaties and by certain unilateral measures announced by nuclear Powers which quite obviously enhance the scope for multilateral negotiation.

Finally, I wish to express, on behalf of my delegation, the fervent wish to see the Conference, as the central forum for disarmament negotiations, take bold initiatives founded on innovating ideas and concepts to pursue with wisdom and patience the consideration of the crucial questions of strategic security, arms control and disarmament in the world on the eve of the third millenium, where the concerns relating to ecology and sustainable development as well as the protection of the environment are at the heart of the debates in the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Senegal for his statement and the kind words he addressed to the Algerian delegation as a whole. I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa, Ambassador Eksteen.

Mr. EKSTEEN (South Africa): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament. As a fellow African, I am delighted to see you presiding over such an important meeting and wish to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and assistance, and am also particularly glad that I can follow a fellow African in my speech. I should also like to congratulate your predecessors for their able leadership during the short period that South Africa has been attending this Conference. In addition, a special word of congratulations to Ambassador Berasategui on his assumption of the post of Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. His competency is well known. I wish to thank him and his staff for their assistance, advice and understanding. We look forward to a long and fruitful association.

Our presence here today is an historic occasion for South Africa. It is the first time that we address the Conference on Disarmament. We see this as being of particular relevance for the southern African region, and also for the African continent as a whole. We regard our presence here as yet another signal that South Africa stands ready to take its rightful place in Africa and elsewhere. Thus, when we commit ourselves to a role in Africa we want to do it in a positive and constructuve way so that all of Africa's interests can be served.

Foremost in the minds of everybody here is surely the finalization of a convention that will eliminate the scourge of chemical weapons. The South African Minister for Foreign Affairs confirmed on 9 January 1989 at the conference on chemical weapons in Paris the South African Government's commitment to the principle of complete and effective prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. On that occasion he declared:

> "We are very much aware of the devastating effects of chemical warfare and my country quite rightly acceded at an early date to the 1925 Geneva Protocol.
>
> "Chemical technology and the art of warfare have both been transformed since the adoption of the Geneva Protocol. A truly international convention banning the use of chemical weapons is sorely needed.
>
> "South Africa stands ready to participate in any ... conference convened to elaborate such a convention."

That remains South Africa's commitment. You can rely on our fullest cooperation.

(Mr. Eksteen, South Africa)

In this regard I want to convey my delegation's appreciation to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, the bureau and the secretariat for the effort they have put into producing CD working paper 400. It is a well-structured document that could form a strong basis for item-transcending compromises in order to meet our deadline of finalizing the convention this summer.

In addition to the threat of chemical weapons, the nuclear threat unfortunately still exists. South Africa acceded to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty on 10 July 1991. Only two months later, on 16 September 1991, South Africa concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) - also a fact that my distinguished friend and Ambassador from Senegal noted previously. The practical implementation of the agreement is in progress.

Not only do these actions illustrate South Africa's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, but they underscore our desire to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free zone in southern Africa. Thus, the Atomic Energy Corporation of South Africa has invited nuclear scientists and experts in related fields from Africa to visit its facilities and eventually cooperate in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The first bilateral agreement following such a visit is almost finalized.

The quest for the complete elimination of the threat of nuclear war must be addressed soon and with conviction. With this in mind, it is of great concern that, with the obvious exception of the proposed chemical weapons convention, the Conference on Disarmament has not - at least during the time that South Africa has been an observer - achieved substantial progress on most of the other topics on its agenda. Targeted and real progress on well-focused issues of disarmament is in the best interest of all States, regardless of size and stature in the international community. The scope of progress always relates directly to the political will with which a problem is approached. The time has come, also here in Geneva, for some hard and creative rethinking on the approach to disarmament in the global as well as the regional context. An oportunity for the international community exists now. Let us grasp it with both hands.

For its part, South Africa is ready to accept its international obligations. Our presence here is proof that South Africa is taking practical steps to honour its international obligations. South Africa, being fully aware of its regional and global obligations, of which disarmament is but one, will play its rightful role as a responsible member of the international community. As a direct result of the initiatives of President De Klerk to pursue a peaceful, negotiated political settlement in South Africa, we have been part of the international trend in greatly reducing our military expenditure. That is a sign of my Government's desire for peace and good-neighbourliness in our region and in the global context. It is in this spirit that you will find South Africa to be a constructive partner in the crucial deliberations of this Conference - now and in the future. We want to demonstrate our willingness to be a responsible and active member of the international community. We pledge our support in the quest to achieve the objectives of this Conference.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of South Africa for his statement and the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. MANGACHI (United Republic of Tanzania): Mr. President, I should like to sincerely congratulate you on your unanimous election to preside over this important Conference on Disarmament. My delegation is confident that with your distinguished credentials and proven ability, you will lead the deliberations of this Conference to a successful conclusion.

Allow me to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of my Government to all the members of the Disarmament Committee for their unanimous endorsement of my country's request to participate in the proceedings of this session of the Conference on Disarmament in an observer capacity.

My Government fully subscribes to the objective of achieving general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. In this vein the United Republic of Tanzania has been following the disarmament initiatives with very keen interest. Besides her particpation in the United Nations disarmament conferences, Tanzania has also played an active role in the six-nation initiative on nuclear disarmament which included Argentina, India, Mexico, Sweden and Greece. These nations issued the Delhi Declaration on 28 January 1985 appealing for an all-embracing halt to the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. They also urged the prohibition of the development, testing, production, deployment and use of all space weapons. A complete test ban would ensure that nuclear arsenals do not grow while negotiations proceed. The test ban must be immediately followed by substantial reductions leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. To further confirm our full commitment to the goal of non-nuclear weapons proliferation Tanzania acceded to the NPT on 26 May 1991.

My Government commends the CD for the progress made in the negotiations for an international convention on chemical weapons.

There is considerable experience of the conversion of military industry to civilian production since the disarmament process began. Hence scientific and technological innovation in the military sphere can be redirected towards social and economic development. In this regard it is expected that developed countries would agree to transfer these technologies to the developing countries on concessional and grant terms. My delegation further hopes that a substantial part of the resources to be released by the reduction in defence budgets in the developed countries would be used for the provision of additional resources to the developing countries so as to enable them to solve their environmental and development problems.

Finally, I should like to reiterate my Government's great faith and full confidence in the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I have no more speakers on my list for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I see none.

As I announced to you at the beginning of this meeting, I now intend to submit to the Conference for adoption the recommendation contained in paragraph 11 of the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events (CD11/45). The recommendation provides that the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts will hold its next session from 27 July to 7 August. If there are no objections, may I take it that the Conference adopts the Ad Hoc Group's recommendation? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I now invite the Conference to take note of the sixth report on the Group of Scientific Experts' second technical test (GSETT-2), distributed as CD11/44. May I consider the Conference takes note of the sixth report? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): The secretariat has distributed today at my request an informal paper containing the timetable of meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies for next week. This timetable was compiled in consultation with the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies; as usual it is purely indicative and where necessary can be changed. I would like to inform you that Thursday, 28 May is an official holiday for the United Nations Office at Geneva and that no technical services will be provided on that day. Therefore the timetable indicates no meeting for Thursday, 28 May. The plenary meeting is therefore scheduled in the timetable for Tuesday, 26 May. As you will note, an informal meeting on the substance of item 2 on the agenda, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", is scheduled in the timetable for Tuesday, 26 May, immediately after the plenary meeting. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Conference is prepared to adopt the timetable. There are no objections.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria made a statement today which coincides with the end of Algeria's term as President. Allow me simply, to conclude this month as President, to pay tribute to delegations for their contribution to our work and in my task. I am also grateful to the members of the secretariat, the translators and the interpreters, for assisting me and performing their tasks effectively. I hope that the term of Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina, who will be occupying the post of President of the Conference for the rest of May and up to 21 June, will be crowned with success.

(The President)

In accordance with the timetable of meetings for this week, I would like to remind you that the informal open-ended consultations on the question of transparency in armaments planned for Friday, 22 May at 3 p.m. will be held today at 3 p.m. in the same room. Since the consultations which were to be held by Ambassador Zahran of Egypt on 22 May have been cancelled, in agreement with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, it has been decided that open-ended consultations will be held on the question of old or abandoned weapons on Friday, 22 May at 3 p.m., chaired by Ambassador Brotodiningrat of Indonesia, in Room V. The meeting of the Working Group on verification in the chemical industry, which is to be held this afternoon in Room V, has been postponed to 4.15 p.m. precisely instead of 3 p.m. I would like to emphasize that the Chairman of the Working Group will start the meeting at 4.15 sharp. I hope that all delegations have taken careful note of these changes in the timetable. As you have already been told, the Conference will hold an informal meeting on item 3 on the agenda which will start five minutes after the end of this plenary meeting.

Since our business for today is finished, I will now adjourn the meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 26 May at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.